

Appl. No. : 09/830,635
Filed : August 2, 2001

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed March 25, 2005, Applicant has amended the application as above. No new matter is added by the amendments as discussed below. Applicant respectfully requests the entry of the amendments and reconsideration of the application in view of the amendments and the remarks set forth below.

Discussion of Claim Amendments

Claims 24-36 and 46-61 have been cancelled, without prejudice. Claims 1-23 were previously cancelled. Claims 37 and 44 have been amended. Upon the entry of the amendments, Claims 37-45 are pending in this application. The amendments to Claim 37 are merely to rewrite dependent Claim 37 in independent form. The amendments to Claim 44 are merely to include all features of the base claim and intervening claims. Thus, the amendments to the claims do not introduce any new matter. Entry of the amendments is respectfully requested.

Discussion of Patentability of Pending Claims

Claims 37-45 have been indicated to be allowable by the Examiner over the prior art of record, if rewritten in independent form. As discussed above, Claims 37 and 45 have been accordingly amended. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 37-45 are allowable over the prior art of record.

Claims 24-26, 30, 46-48, 59 and 61 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Degani (U.S. Patent No. 6,100,475) in view of Tsukamoto (U.S. Patent No. 5,406,459). Claims 24, 27-35, 46-47, 49-57, 59 and 61 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shimada (U.S. Patent No. 6,087,597) in view of Tsukamoto. In order to expedite the prosecution of the application, Applicant has cancelled all rejected claims. However, Applicant reserves the right to argue patentability of the cancelled claims at a later date.

Comments on Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance

Applicant wishes to address the Examiner's statement of reasons for allowance in this Office Action mailed March 25, 2005. Applicant respectfully submits that the claims should be allowed based on the entire language rather than focusing on any specific portion thereof.

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No Disclaimers or Disavowals

Although the present communication may include alterations to the application or claims, or characterizations of claim scope or referenced art, Applicant is not conceding in this application that previously pending claims are not patentable over the cited references. Rather, any alterations or characterizations are being made to facilitate expeditious prosecution of this application.

Applicant reserves the right to pursue at a later date any previously pending or other broader or narrower claims that capture any subject matter supported by the present disclosure, including subject matter found to be specifically disclaimed herein or by any prior prosecution. Accordingly, reviewers of this or any parent, child or related prosecution history shall not reasonably infer that Applicant has made any disclaimers or disavowals of any subject matter supported by the present application.

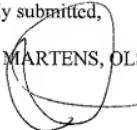
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CONCLUSION

In view of Applicant's amendments to the application and the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any remaining concerns which might prevent the prompt allowance of the application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number appearing below.

Respectfully submitted,

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